

Message Text

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E.OM 11652: N/A
TAGS: ASEC, AS
SUBJ: COST OF SECURITY MEASURES

REF: CANBERRA 5712

1. IN PREPARATIONS TO HAVE OUR SYDNEY CONSULATE GENERAL MOVE TO NEW AND MUCH MORE SUITABLE QUARTERS, I NOTE THAT ONE-TIME INSTALLATION AND SECURITY COSTS ARE ESTIMATED TO TOTAL SOME \$335,000 AUSTRALIAN. OF THESE ESTIMATED COSTS, THOSE ATTRIBUTABLE TO SECURITY AMOUNT TO SOME \$147,000 AUSTRALIAN, WHICH IS A VERY SIGNIFICANT PROPORTION.

2. I REALIZE THAT OVER \$50,000 OF THAT SUM IS FOR PROTECTION OF THE C&R AREA, A FIRST PRIORITY CONSIDERATION. NEVERTHELESS I QUESTION WHETHER SUCH THINGS AS BULLET-PROOF GLASS ON THE STAIRWELLS IS A NECESSITY, OR A LUXURY THAT WE COULD WELL DO WITHOUT. I BELIEVE THE LATTER TO BE THE CASE.

3. IT MAY NOT BE CONSIDERED RELEVANT TO THE QUESTION AT HAND, BUT THE EXPENDITURE A\$334,850 FOR THE COST OF MAKING THE NEW OFFICES SECURE AND A SIMULTANEOUS DECISION TO ELIMINATE THE TRADE CENTER IN SYDNEY IS IN MY OPINION TOTALLY INCONSISTENT I BELIEVE A CAREFUL REVIEW OF THE BASIC NEEDS FOR SECURITY WOULD RESULT IN A
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SUBSTANTIAL REDUCTION, AND IT IS MY RECOMMENDATION THAT THIS COURSE BE INITIATED.

4. A A GENERAL PHILOSOPHY I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE THE POINT THAT THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS TOTAL SECURITY IN THIS LIFE, AND IN TAKING SECURITY MEASURES THE RULE OF REASON MUST APPLY. A BASIC LEVEL OF SECURITY, REFLECTED

IN THE EMBASSY BY THE PRESENCE OF MARINE SECURITY GUARDS, PROPER SAFEGUARDING OF EQUIPMENT AND PERSONNEL BY NORMAL PHYSICAL PRECAUTIONS, AND VIGILANCE, WHEN SUPPLEMENTED BY EXTENSIVE AND PERHAPS EXOTIC RESOURCES RAPIDLY APPROACHES THE LEVEL OF DIMINISHING RETURNS. IN OUR CONSULATES AND CONSULATES GNEERAL THROUGHOUT AUSTRALIA, THERE IS ALSO A LEVEL INVLOVING PHYSICAL SAFEGUARDS OF PEOPLE AND EQUIPMENT BEYOND WHICH IT IS NOT EXPEDIENT TO GO.

5. I BELIEVE THAT THE UNITED STATES SHOULD ALSO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT ITS PUBLIC IMAGE; TOO OBVIOUS EMPHASIS IN OUR OFFICIAL PREMISIS OF PREOCCUPATION WITH SECURITY DOES NOT SIT WELL IN AUSTRALIA'S OPEN SOCIETY.

6. IT IS A WELL KNOWN MILITARY DOCTRINE THAT A COMMANDER'S FIRST DUTY IS TO THE SAFETY OF HIS TROOPS. I WISH TO EMPHASIZE THAT THIS COMMANDER IS FULLY COGNIZANT OF HIS DUTY TOWARDS AMERICAN AND AUSTRALIAN PERSONNEL IN THE U.S. GOVERNMENT'S EMPLOY IN AUSTRALIA, AND WILL CONTINUE TO ENSURE THEIR SAFETY WITH ALL REASONABLE MEASURES. BUT THERE DOES COME A REASONABLE LIMIT. I WOULD NOT WANT THAT LIMIT EXCEEDED EITHER IN REGARD TO MY OWN SAFETY OR THAT OF MY COLLEAGUES IN AUSTRALIA.
ALSTON

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